

Change: A stranger things and Brightburn crossover by RealEdgeQuarter

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Adventure, Humor

Language: English

Status: Completed

Published: 2019-05-30 08:40:41

Updated: 2019-06-27 14:25:33

Packaged: 2019-12-12 18:38:20

Rating: T

Chapters: 5

Words: 11,350

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The events that transpired back in the eighties are a long distant memory for Mike and Jane Wheeler, since those chaotic days their lives have been mostly peaceful, only being interrupted by the occasional death in the family. But nothing in this life lasts forever, now with the rise of the murderous Superboy wannabe, Brightburn, Jane finds herself forced to fight evil once again.

1. Introductions

AN (this is my first story on here, I hope you enjoy it. Also one thing you may need to know ahead of time so it isn't confusing is that this story is set in modern day. God bless!)

Jane stared at it, biding her time as she listened to that vexing buzzing. She counted down the seconds in her head and smiled when she reached zero, soon as she did her patience was rewarded with two perfect golden Eggos popping out of the toaster. After this she walked into the living room, the Eggos floating right behind her. She frowned slightly at what she saw in there, her husband, Mike, was staring straight at the TV watching the latest news about Brightburn. She sighed and asked her husband. "Is he doing it again?"

Mike turned around and grimly nodded, he then turned the TV off with a click of the remote. Mike ran a hand through his mop of dark hair in frustration before telling Jane. "I just don't know why someone would waste that much power like that. He could be using that power to help people, but what is he using it for?" He paused for a few seconds to let the rhetorical question linger in the air before answering it. "To murder people, that's what. You would think a kid would want to be a superhero wouldn't you?"

Jane agreed with this sentiment and both were quiet for a short while. Then Jane remembered something important, she hadn't eaten her Eggo yet and it would be getting cold, so she pulled them both towards her with her mind and quickly devoured both. As she did so Mike began to laugh, she looked at him curiously and he just told her he'll make himself a bowl of cereal. She blushed and tried to apologize, but all of her words were muffled by the food still in her mouth, This caused Mike to chuckle harder as he got off the couch. "Don't worry about it," was the last thing he said before going inside the kitchen.

As he was in the kitchen she glanced at one of the picture frames on the wall and smiled, it was a picture of them and all their friends and family on their wedding day back in ninety three. Mike was trying to cut everyone a slice of wedding cake and she was glaring at the cake impatiently, Dustin, who was sitting just three seats down from her,

was doing the same. She frowned when she saw her father, Jim Hopper, she still missed him even though it's been a few years now since he passed away. She shook her head and looked away from the photo, there was no need to dwell on that. Unfortunately for her, as she turned her head away from that photo, she saw another photo that dug up much worse memories, it was of a little dark haired girl with pale skin and brown eyes, standing alone in a field of flowers. Jane was filled with guilt and found herself stuck there, forced to think about what could've been.

After a few minutes passed by, she was shaken out of her thoughts by the ringing of the doorbell. She started to make her towards the front door, but her husband popped out in front of her from the kitchen and told her not to worry about it. He grasped the door handle and pulled the door open, before immediately slamming it shut again. He turned around and looked at his wife with fear in his eyes and whispered. "It's them," she simply sighed at this and told him not to worry about it, she tried to give him a comforting smile to assuage his worry as she passed him by, it had only a small amount of success.

She opened the door and wasn't surprised to see the two men in black suits waiting for her on the other side. The younger looking of the two seemed to be about thirty, he had tanned skin and blonde hair. One of the first things she noticed about him was how impatient and annoyed he seemed, she would later notice his hand was never far away from his holster. The older looking of the two appeared to be about fifty, he was bald with dark skin, and unlike his companion he seemed much calmer.

As soon as she opened the door the younger of the two looked like he was about to go on a tirade, but thankfully was interrupted before he could even begin with the older of the two speaking first. "Apologies Mrs Wheeler for showing up unannounced like this, but please let me introduce myself and my subordinate." When he said subordinate the younger of the two scowled. "My name is Simon Graves, and my subordinate here is Jack Graves," she raised an eyebrow at this and asked if they were related, Simon seemed to expect this question while Jack seemed offended by it. "Yes, Jack here is my older brother... I do realize that could be hard to believe but that's getting

off topic. We work with the FBI and we came here to discuss with you a certain topic that's been making the news recently, but out here isn't exactly the ideal spot to do that, so do you mind letting us come in?" She told the two it was alright and ushered them both in, Jack glared spitefully at Mike as he walked past him.

Soon they were all sitting on the couch and an awkward silence reigned over them all, the only noise in the room was the ticking of a clock. Mike hopping to end the silence asked the two agents. "So what brings you here?"

Before Simon could answer the question Jack answered it. "We're here to take subject Eleven with us so she can eliminate the threat that is Brightburn."

With this statement everyone in the room glared at Jack with various degrees of hate and annoyance, Jack for his part could care less what they all thought. After a few tense seconds past Simon began to tug at his collar and spoke. "I apologize for my subordinate's... lack of tact Mrs Wheeler, but he did pretty much describe our purpose here, of course, it's all up to you on whether or not you wish to come with us. Personally, I would completely understand if you didn't wish to come, fighting Brightburn does see-" She interrupted Simon by asking for him to give her a moment, she wanted to talk to her husband about this, Simon told her to go ahead.

Mike and her both got up and made their way to the kitchen, as soon as they walked inside Mike asked her. "You can't seriously be considering this, can you?"

She nodded and replied. "You remember when you told me about a wise man who once said, 'With great power comes great responsibility,' well don't you?" Mike's eyes widened at this and he quickly pointed out that was from Spiderman. Jane said, "Oh," she then became silent for a moment before pointing out how that didn't make her point any less accurate.

Mike sighed at this. "At least promise me you'll stay safe," she smiled before telling him she'll try.

While the couple were discussing all this, Jack and Simon were

discussing something completely different. "Why'd you call her a subject you numbskull, did you even read the file?" Jack defended himself by claiming he was only calling her what she was, that got him slapped by Simon. They grew silent after this until Simon noticed something on the wall, a photo of a girl that looked uncannily similar to their current asset. Putting aside his personal distaste for the intern, he nudged him with his shoulder. "Hey Jack, see that photo over there?" Jack looked up from his phone and cursed when he saw the photo. "Kid looks just like her doesn't she?" Jack agreed with this and pointed out how the file didn't mention anything about children. Jack went to get up, but Simon grabbed his arm. "What are you doing?"

Jack looked at him as if he was stupid. "Going to arrest the two for not reporting this to the Government, they should've known we could've used an asset like that." Now it was Simon turn to look at Jack as if he was stupid, (not implying he isn't) having a lack of words at such sheer insanity Simon elected to do the only thing he could, slap Jack silly.

By the time Mike and Jane walked back into the room, both of the men were settled down, but as soon as he saw Jane, Jack couldn't help but ask with a smug grin on his face. (believing this could be his big break) "Did you two have a child without telling us?" Jane and Mike both looked like they had been punched in the gut, and Simon was getting ready to punch Jack in the gut. But ultimately there was no need for such an action because Jane spoke up.

"Yes, we did, we told you people about her and they didn't care." Jack then asked about where she was then, Jane simply informed him that she was dead. While Jack didn't believe her and wanted to press the question, the look from Simon that promised nothing less than a slow painful death made him shut up for once.

Simon once again apologized for his subordinate's actions and for her loss, she informed him that it's been at least a decade, so most of the pain was gone, no one in the room believed her words, including herself. Jack looking to change the subject once he realized this wasn't going to be his key to rising up the ranks so he could obtain unlimited power, asked if she decided on whether or not she was coming with them. She sighed and said yes, Jack did a little fist pump

while Simon thanked her for agreeing.

After a tearful goodbye with her husband, and then spending at least three hours driving around town doing the same with all of her friends and family, the trio left Hawkins Indiana behind them in the agents old beat up white truck.

2. Speeches, fantastic plans and a battle

Jane stretched her legs, she was happy to finally get out of that miserable rust bucket Simon called a truck, especially after riding in it for a whole day straight. She felt like shuddering when she thought about the awkward silence that dominated most of their trip. They had just arrived a few minutes ago to this temporary base of operations, (at least that's what Simon called it, in reality, it was just three large tents sitting in the middle of the desert.)

After they all spent a few minutes stretching, the agents led her to the largest tent sitting in the middle of the camp. She walked inside and was appalled by what she saw, the soldiers inside were... lazing about! There was at least a dozen of them inside, about half of them seemed to be playing poker and the other half were playing truth or dare. The only one in the room not partaking in these activities was an old fat man with a long grey beard that reached his chest, he also wore a General's uniform. She would've commended him for not goofing off with his underlings if he wasn't fast asleep in his chair of course.

Jack was especially enraged by all this, so he pulled out his pistol and fired it into the air, he then began to give a five-hour speech which would ultimately end in him getting knocked out by the soldiers. One positive effect of his action besides his temporary five-hour ego boost was the fact he managed to wake the General up. While he was giving a speech to rival his personal idol, William Henry Harrison, Jane and Simon began to introduce themselves to the General.

The General recognizing Simon immediately wrapped him into a tight bear hug much to Simon's chagrin. Eventually, Simon was able to worm his way out of that personal nightmare of his, and that's when the General noticed Jane. He raised a bushy eyebrow in surprise at her appearance, he gave the two a skeptical look and asked in a gruff Texan accent. "Are we sending housewives to beat Brightburn now Simon?" Jane was justifiably angered by this, she was a proud owner of two Chick-fil-A franchises, not some lowly housewife! She was about to give him a piece of her mind, but before she could he looked at her with a thoughtful expression on his face

and began to speak, mostly to himself though. "You know what, that could work. We'll have her go tell Brightburn that he's grounded and that should put this whole mess to bed."

Jane no longer wanted to give him a piece of her mind, now she wanted to toss him through the wall. Simon, quickly noticing her righteous fury, tried to calm her down, he really didn't feel like cleaning up the General's blood today, but that action proved unnecessary when the General began to laugh. "Got you good there didn't I? Don't worry I know your not just some housewife, your Jane Wheeler, the bane of the EPA and savior of the world." Jane was at first confused by this, but she quickly became flattered. She waved off his titles for her, claiming that beating the Mind flyer twice wasn't that big a deal.

Simon, realizing the two's conversation was getting off track, asked the General what their plan was. The General pouted about this for a short while before finally conceding. "Well the plan I came up with is simple, we nuke the town." The duo stared at him in silent disbelief until the General began to laugh again. "Just kidding with you again, we won't be nuking any towns, at least that's what the president told me. No, the actual plan is to send the nice space wizard lady into the town and have her melt Brightburn's brains like she did to those folks who worked at the EPA back in the eighties. So does all that sound like a plan or what?" Both of them agreed, that in fact, it did sound like a plan.

But Jane had one question for the General. "Nice space wizard lady, really?" The General simply nodded and told her she was just like those space wizards in those movies his grandchildren love.

After all this, Jane left them all behind to begin walking to the small town of Superior Arizona, which was only a short half hour hike from the three tents she was just at. She could've gotten there a whole lot faster if they just let her drive there, but they told her a car would be practically begging Brightburn to attack it, so she was stuck with hiking.

Her nose wrinkled in disgust shortly before entering that burning town, she had a pretty good idea what was causing that smell, and as she walked past burning bodies any doubt was removed. She found

herself wandering down the empty streets far longer then she would like, the only noise to be heard was the crinkling of flames.

Minutes turned to hours, and yet there was still no sign of Brightburn, only more empty streets. So she was almost relieved when she heard a young girl scream, Jane quickly darted towards the alleyway where she heard it coming from and wasn't surprised by what she saw. A young girl, about thirteen if Jane had to guess, was slowly backing away from Brightburn into the alleyway. The news never really shown Brightburn up close before, most of their shots were blurry and at least from a mile away, so she was pretty surprised by just how tacky his whole getup was. His red mask resembled a massive sock he pulled over his head, the only slightly intimidating thing about it was the football like stitching going down the middle of it because they sort of looked like teeth. His cape was equally tacky if not more so, it looked like he stole a picnic table cover and used that as a cape.

Up to this point, Jane wasn't exactly sure what she would've felt upon seeing Brightburn, destroyer of at least a dozen cities, but out of everything she imagined, she never thought she would feel pity. "He's just a child," were the words that kept playing through her head. She kept trying to remind herself it wasn't like she didn't know that going into all this, but she couldn't bring herself to kill him. So she stood there, unnoticed by the two children as Brightburn began to give his evil monologue to the little girl. Jane was barely paying attention to that, but she did manage to pick up bits and pieces of it, something about how the girl, (according to him she was named Caitlyn) could run from him but never hide, he then began to rant how they should be together forever and that's around the point Jane decided enough was enough.

Brightburn was reaching out to touch Caitlyn when he started to roar in pain and collapsed onto the ground. Caitlyn sensing her opportunity to flee did so, she ran past Jane, nodding at her with gratitude as she passed by. Brightburn tried to pick himself up a few times, usually punching a wall or whatever else was nearby in the process. Jane meanwhile found keeping him down and melting his brain with her mind pretty taxing mentally, not in regards to her nose bleeds from doing such actions, she managed to mostly get over

those years ago. No, she was struggling more with the emotional side of mentality because of how much he was screaming in pain.

Eighty minutes ticked by and Brightburn was still screaming, he was also beginning to blow up anything that moved with his lasers, Jane figured she should be alright as long as she stayed out of sight. And that's when her radio crackled to life, Jack was on the other end, screaming something about hurrying this up, so he can her beat up some soldiers or something. She cringed when she heard this, her cringing only got worse when Brightburn looked at right where she was hiding. She found herself forced to let go of their connection in order to leap out of the way, soon the dumpster she was hiding behind was set ablaze. Hoping to get a head start on Brightburn she began to run down the alleyway. Unfortunately for her, right as she was about to reach the exit, Brightburn suddenly appeared right in front of said exit.

He then began yet another evil villain monologue, this time it was something about hunters and prey. She used the time she had been given to concoct an escape plan, it was simple really, all she had to was use her mind to pull one loose board in the fairly destroyed building next to them and... the whole building collapses right onto Brightburn. Unsure of what to do next, Jane darted past an open door into another burning building right next to them.

She barely got past the door when she heard a roar of anger and a loud crashing sound, so she redoubled her efforts to get out of this building. As soon as she got onto the street she sighed, Brightburn was waiting for her again. He started a third villain monologue, this time about how annoying she was. She figured she had nothing better to do besides proving him right, so mid-speech she used her power to fling a car at him. Without looking he swatted it away and continued his speech, he wasn't able to do the same for the next dozen cars she flung at him.

Another three hours passed, and Jane found herself doing something she hasn't done in a long time, wiping blood away from her nose. She stared at the massive pile of cars and other junk that she managed to pile over Brightburn, she knew it wouldn't keep him down for long, especially with the odd laser beam blowing holes into it, but it should keep her hidden from him. She was sitting on the roof of a building,

it was about a mile away from the pile she made. She was doing what she was doing earlier, keeping him down and melting his brain, but now from a safe distance.

Two more hours passed and Jane was beginning to feel a bit woozy, she wiped away some of the blood coming out of her ears. "Some sleep wouldn't hurt, it's not like he could find me up here," she thought to herself. She fought back those urges by telling herself she had to wait just a little bit longer, then she would be able to go back home, kiss Mike and eat all the eggos she wanted.

Speaking of Eggos she found a nice warm stack of them right on her lap, she began to savor their sweet taste as she slowly devoured them, she was even more happy to realize all the bleeding stopped! She enjoyed all this for a few blissful minutes until at last, she woke back up to see Brightburn standing right in front of her. He was no longer in the mood for any more monologues, so he simply used his laser eyes to pierce her through her chest.

He watched her collapse onto the ground in shock and pain, he savored her expression. He decided this was another one he didn't want to forget, so he pulled out his phone and snapped a picture,(it really was far more efficient than drawing them) before flying away, leaving her there to die alone.

3. Remember?

Jane's eyes felt heavy and the world around her was a blur, it felt like she was spinning in place as time seemed to become more of a suggestion than a fact. She could hear different voices, but she had no idea who they were or what they were saying because of the loud constant beeping. As her thoughts became more and more jumbled she suddenly remembered Mike, she wasn't sure who he was but she knew he could help. She tried reaching out to the boy ment- wait, he hasn't been a boy for years now, hasn't he? So she tried reaching out mentally to the man and succeeded, soon they were both in that dark place and he seemed relieved to see her, but all his comforting words came out only as gibberish to her, and when she tried to speak the same happened with her. So she decided to cut the connection. Once she cut the connection everyone everything became black and she stopped thinking.

She sighed as Mike and her waited outside his door. "Do we really have to do this Mike?" The worry was evident in her voice, but he told her not to worry and everything would go fine. Almost as soon as he said this, the door opened up and his mother, Mrs. Wheeler was one the other side. She smiled at the two and invited them both in claiming dinner was almost ready. Soon she was sitting at a table with the entire Wheeler family, Mrs. Wheeler was being extremely polite and chatty, Jane appreciated that. Nancy who she already knew. was doing her best to pretend not to, so as not to arouse any suspicion. Holly was trying her best to string together some form of sentence but was failing miserably. Ted Wheeler was silently eating his food, staring at her all the while.

About halfway through the dinner, Ted finally asked her a question that surprised everyone there. "So how hard was it to beat the Mindflayer, Eleven?" Everyone stared at him with various looks of confusion, Mike was barely able to ask him past all his shock how long did he know, Ted said since it all happened. Mrs. Wheeler was especially confused and asked what a Mindflayer was and who is eleven, Ted simply asked her in return if she was paying any attention to their children.

"Look at what I can do mommy!" Jane watched Millie run up to her, a soccer ball floating right behind her head and some blood trickling down her pale freckled cheeks. Jane told Millie she had done a fantastic job and soon would be just as good as her mom. What a mistake that was. Jane then picked up the four-year-old and began to tickle her causing giggles to fill the air.

The giggles slowly faded away and were replaced by a light beeping. Jane's eyes fluttered open and she groaned at what she saw, four white walls, a heart rate monitor and her husband sitting in a chair by her bedside, she was stuck in a hospital room. Her husband quickly noticed she was awake and grabbed her hand, assuring her she was alright. This caused her to groan again and say. "I know that but how? I doubt Brightburn would let anybody just walk in and rescue me." Mike was about to answer her when the door opened and the Graves walked in.

She immediately noticed and was slightly surprised by Jack's arm being in a sling, she would've asked him about if she actually cared about him at all. Jack looked like he was about to say something but Simon shot him a look before beginning to speak himself. "Allow me to answer your question, Mrs. Wheeler. Apparently some girl you rescued managed to find you and returned the favor by dragging you back to the evac zone we set up. Also, the reason why Brightburn didn't interfere with our evac plans was because of the General's quick thinking. When we saw your heart rate drop down, the general called in a fake nuclear strike over the radio. Brightburn must've not been confident in his ability to take on a nuke because he flew away pretty quick."

Jane accepted all this happily, if they were able to set up an evac zone maybe some people could have escaped, then she realized he said they saw her heart rate drop and decided to ask how they could've seen that. When she did Simon seemed apologetic and embarrassed. "During the drive to Arizona when we both fell asleep, Jack here decided to install heart rate monitors inside both of us. I would commend him for being able to perform a minor surgical procedure on two people without waking either of them up, but it was simply inappropriate." Jane and Mike stared at them slack-jawed, Simon quickly added. "Don't worry, both of them were removed

during the six weeks you were in a coma." This caused Jane's shock to grow and she asked why didn't they tell her that she was asleep for six weeks sooner, Simon defended himself by claiming she never asked.

Jane sighed and decided to ignore all that and asked Simon. "So what are we gonna do against Brightburn now?"

Before Simon could answer Jack decided it was his turn to talk. "Well during the six weeks you decided to be useless, we sent in subject Twenty-five to see if he could find out any possible weakness that Brightburn may have. But he's in a coma now too, so the current plan is to have you use your abilities to communicate with him and see if he found any possible weakness."

Jane blinked in surprise and asked. "Subject Twenty-five?" Jack nodded and began to explain that subject Twenty-five was the latest edition to their Psy-Op's program, he further claimed that Twenty-five's ability is to read and share memories. Jane blinked again and asked. "So you guys kept kidnapping, abusing and experimenting on children?"

Jack seemed offended by her question and retorted. "It's not kidnapping when you pay their parents to give them to you." Simon cringed as Jack was flung through the wall and was knocked out, he looked at Jane and claimed he had no idea such a thing was happening, Jane simply snorted in disgust and asked where Twenty-five was, Simon told her two doors down on the left.

Jane stared at the small, sleeping, bald child and was filled with anger and pity, she considered just taking them and running away, it's not even like the government could really do anything about it. But she decided against it, for now. The kid is still on life support so she'll do it after she beats Brightburn. She slowly reached out to the child, closing her eyes as she did so, and when they opened, she was in the dark place. She was face to face with the child, they seemed dazed and confused, even slightly afraid of her. She told them not to be afraid and asked if they found out anything about Brightburn, they didn't seem to understand her words but they did understand her body language. They began to speak, or to be more accurate tried to speak. They seemed surprised by the garbled nonsense that came out

of their mouth for a few seconds until a thoughtful expression crossed their face, Jane soon felt something probing the edge of her mind, she asked the child if it was them and they nodded, so she let them in.

"How's the food, honey?" Brandon looked up from his food to look at his mother and smiled, he told her it was perfect. This caused his mother to smile in return and ruffle his hair, he blushed and protested this but his mother ignored him. Not too long after this, they finished their dinner, done their chores and all went to bed. Brandon's sleep was plagued by a tempting red light and voices speaking in an unknown alien tongue, begging him to claim his destiny. When he finally awoke, he was alone in the barn yet again. He sighed as he stared at that locked trapdoor that haunted his dreams, it was the third time he woke up like this, this month. After he spent a while staring at the trapdoor as if his stare alone could force it open, he left the barn, slowly and quietly making his way back home, didn't want to worry Mom about this after all.

After a few hours more, Jane's eyes opened and she was back in the hospital room, she quickly noticed Mike and Simon standing behind her. Simon semi-nervously asked her if she found out anything, she assured him she did, she knew exactly where they had to go to beat Brightburn.

4. Sin

Jane stepped out of the van and did her best to suppress a shiver as she gazed at the snow-covered landscape. The sun was setting in the distance, casting the sky into shades of red, yellow and blue. What used to be a farm and home were now replaced by snow as far as the eye can see. The only evidence that remained of there ever being anything here other than snow, was the bits and pieces of glass, wood, and metal, all stubbornly sticking out of the snow. (The cleanup crews never had the time to remove the debris from the plane crash that destroyed this farm, Brightburn began his attacks too early for that.) But there was more than just the cold that made her want to shiver, for deep beneath the ground, she could feel something waiting, something hateful.

Simon soon followed her out of the van and asked. "Sure you can find it under all this snow?" Jane simply nodded and began to walk towards where she felt the presence. Simon shook his head and muttered about psychics being weird before banging his fist on the van's back door. "Time to move out," as soon as he said this, the back door swung open and about a dozen soldiers poured out. They pointed their guns every which way and slowly began to spread out.

A few minutes passed by until Jane called out that she found it and needed help. Simon and the soldiers did their best to quickly trudge through the snow. When they reached her, she was digging a small hole in the snow with her foot staring intently downward. Simon cleared his throat gaining her attention, he then asked her if this was it, her only response was to grimly nod. One of the soldiers, slightly confused, asked how she knew. "I can feel it, waiting for us deep below." The soldier, even more confused now, asked if she was talking about the ship. "Maybe, I just know it's connected to the ship," she paused in thought for a moment before adding. "I also know it wants all of us dead, but it can only lie and manipulate, that's all it was made for." A few seconds passed before she shrugged and continued in a much lighter tone. "Then again, most of that's just guesswork from Brightburn's memories, for all I know it could be a full-blown reality warper."

The soldier who had asked the question paled when he heard this, Jane noticing his worry continued. "Don't worry, I'm pretty good at psychic warfare with evil entities, " that did little to comfort the soldier's fear. He was far less concerned about evil presences then he was afraid of being led into battle against an evil superbeing by an obviously crazy lady. Jane decided she had done enough to comfort the soldier, clapped her hands together and told them all to start digging.

After about an hour of digging, (for some reason somebody figured it would be a bright idea to bring only one shovel.) They had managed to remove about four feet of snow and a rather large hunk of metal, revealing a dark hole that seemed to stretch on forever. She stared down into the abyss as it was slowly illuminated by a baleful red light. Jane was surprised by this, (by the hole's depth, not the ominous red light,) it was supposed to just be a little dirt filled space underneath a barn, not an entrance into a cave. On the plus side, the red light revealed a sturdy metal ladder.

Jane was about to ask Simon if he wanted to climb down first when his radio crackled to life. "This is command to alpha team, command to alpha team. Brightburn has been spotted heading straight towards your position, ETA is about an hour or less, Over."

Simon paled and was silent for a short while before finally replying. "Roger." Quickly composing himself, he told Jane to go ahead and do what she needed to do, while they all stayed up here. Jane, (not to mention the other soldiers) wanted to argue this, but he was having none of it, so she thanked them all and made her way down the ladder.

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Jane gasped when she went to go down another rung, her foot instead of finding a firm surface to rest on, went into a pool of water. She looked down in slight worry but was relieved to see the bottom was only knee deep. So with her fear of never getting to the ship gone, (while she could hold her breath underwater for a while thanks to Dr. Brenner's tests. She never learned how to swim, also thanks to Dr. Brenner), she stepped off the ladder and into the puddle. She was surprised by just how warm the water felt, it reminded her of a bath

she would take back home. When she turned around to look at where she was, she was further surprised by what she saw. A seemingly endless tunnel that led straight towards the center of the light, its walls were made of a strange black alien metal. To top it all off, the tunnel looked like it was filled with the water the whole way. A groan escaped her lips when she realized why everything down here was so off. "Guess I was wrong and this one is a reality warper, crud."

Jane waded down the tunnel, for what seemed like hours. She was forced to wonder how much time has passed and if she would have enough time to help Simon by the time she found the damn ship. But such thoughts came to a crashing halt when Jane noticed it, something else splashing through the water behind her, fast. Without a second thought, Jane began to sprint down the tunnel. The red light beginning to darken yet somehow grew even brighter around her at the same time, the contradiction caused her head to hurt. Jane began to hear a voice come from the light, a sweet familiar voice she held dear. It was asking her why she was running away, wasn't Jane proud of her? Jane did her best to ignore the voice for it was just a phantom, a memory. But that grew difficult when the voice slowly grew more cold and hostile, it told her cruel truths she knew and reminded herself of every night.

She froze as she felt something cold and bitter slowly began to wrap itself around her leg. She quickly came to her senses and was about to try kicking it off, when she heard the voice asking her one last question. "Why did you murder me, mom?" Jane froze and the feeling quickly rose up from her leg and began to wrap around her like a snake, crushing her bones and burning her lungs. Her eyes became blurry and red consumed all she saw.

When the red faded away, she found herself back there, a meadow filled with lilies, currently, they could be mistaken for roses. Two children were there with her, one was smiling showing off her buck teeth, the other was painting the lilies red. "Look at what I did mommy, aren't you proud?" Jane couldn't help but stare in silent horror at the two children, Millie not noticing this continued. "I made Tommy fly real high up, " she paused looking sheepish, "think I may have broken him though. But Auntie Nancy shouldn't mind since her

and uncle John have lots of other kids." It was at that moment Jane remembered all those kids who went missing recently, alongside her father's warnings she so happily ignored. It all became perfectly clear for Jane at that moment, so her patience for her daughter's actions snapped, alongside Millie's neck.

Jane cradled the two bodies for hours. Eventually, her father found her and did his best to comfort her. He took them all down to the station, never asking a question for he already knew what happened. Jane kept asking herself the whole way, why she never listened to her Dad's warnings. "You really need to talk to Millie about how she uses her powers. Don't give me that annoyed look, we both know that a family doesn't go through six pets in a year. Do I really need to explain it to you, she's killing them, Jane." Jane hated herself, she was stupid for not seeing it sooner, the fact almost every kid in the neighborhood was scared of her except for Tommy should've tipped her off. She was selfish for letting her dad cover it all up and she was an awful mother for killing her daughter instead of helping her.

She felt her hate and guilt slowly tighten itself around her as she slowly died, the phantoms cruel laughter being her only companion. But like a hand pulling her out of an oily black ocean, a thought suddenly occurred to her. "If you die now how can you ever become better?" She tried to refuse that lifeline, telling herself she could never hope to be better, the thought simply responded by pointing out it was better to try and fail than to never try.

Gathering every ounce of her willpower and hope left, she pushed as hard as possible. The serpent's grip around her began to loosen despite its best attempts to do otherwise. The laughter, (which she now realized was coming from the serpent,) began to die down. The serpent began to scream in pain and terror, it's voice slowly morphing from that familiar one into an indescribable one, the best comparison she could make would be that of an angry hive of wasps buzzing. With one last great effort, she managed to free herself from the snake's grip and found their positions quickly switched. The serpent writhed about in her arms, doing its best to bite her but failing. She began to shatter all the hastily half-built mental barriers the serpent had placed, and when she finished the serpent's mind became an open book to her.

She was high in the clouds, looking down she beheld a green and lush world, it held no signs of civilization besides the occasional overgrown skyscraper, stubbornly poking out of the forest. Her focus shifted and she found an odd sight, someone running desperately through the jungle. They ran right past her without noticing and that's when she realized something, they weren't a human. Instead, they resembled a bipedal bird about the size of a human man. She watched as a red beam of light darted right past her and went right through the Birdman, causing him to collapse. She blinked in slight surprise at this, her surprise only grew when another Birdman covered in various skulls, (of the Birdman variety) flew out of seemingly nowhere. It slowly approached the dying Birdman, a mad glint in its beady black eyes.

She turned away when the first Birdman began to scream. Her perspective shifted again, she was in the air once more and she heard a noise like thunder. The sky turned red and descending from the sky was a massive pyramid made of that same black metal she saw in the tunnel. Then she watched as the world was slowly consumed by the pyramid, and her hearing was overcome with that constant buzzing.

She delved deeper into its mind, finding out all of its secrets and just how it worked. Then when she found all she needed to know about it, she destroyed it.

She opened her eyes and was relieved to see the moonlight shining down on her from above. She glanced around and was rather happy to see everything was back where it was supposed to be. No longer was she in some weird tunnel, now she was in a normal crawl space underneath the remains of a barn. Her first guess had been right, after all, the AI hadn't been a reality warper after all. (She managed to figure out exactly what it was and its limitations when she was inside its mind. She also learned many other interesting things, such as how to make the perfect chicken nugget. Which she fully intended on integrating into her Chick-fil-A franchises after all was said and done.)

Jane laid there in emotional exhaustion until she heard gunshots and screams ring out in the distance. Jane quickly picked herself off the ground, using her powers to do the same with the ship as she got out of the hole and made her way towards the noise.

AN (Hope you enjoyed this chapter, it took a long time to write and its the one I changed the most from the first draft. The Millie being a murderer and actually getting killed by her mom was an idea I had in the middle of the last draft. Thought it worked a lot more than having her just be good and dying in an accident. So once I make the next and final chapter I'll go back and edit the other ones to make them more in line with this new twist. Thanks to AM83220 for his advice. Please feel free to let me know any criticisms or thoughts you may have. I love hearing peoples thoughts about my writing, and I also realize criticism is important for improvement. God bless ya'll.)

5. Maybe

The air was bitter cold and completely still. The only sound that could be heard was that of snow crunching. The stars and moon watched on from high above, no clouds blocking their sight. They cared not for the scene unfolding below them, their only purpose was to provide light so others could see it and gawk.

He slowly trailed behind his prey, a bemused look marking his face. He watched as it desperately tried to claw itself further away from him, leaving a trail of warm, red snow everywhere it crawled.

Despite his outer bemusement, he was annoyed. This whole trip seemed to have been a waste of time to him. Hawaii, that's where he should've been right now. Instead, he's all the way back here of all places. He had only come back here because of a bad feeling he had, one that overwhelmed all of his common sense and yelled at him to come back here. And like an idiot, he listened to it. When he got here he didn't expect to find anything, he was wrong. There were about a dozen idiots out here, all complaining about the cold. When he first saw them he thought he may have been right to listen to that feeling, perhaps they somehow found the ship. But he was able to quickly reassure himself they couldn't possibly find the ship, and even if they did that wouldn't stop him.

His thoughts were interrupted when instead of his foot sinking into the cold snow, he felt it press onto something solid and heard a scream. He looked down and realized his prey had stopped, and he had just stepped onto their back probably shattering their spine in the process. He slowly retracted his foot from their back, and gave them a light kick that flipped them onto their back. His eyes met blue frightened ones and he knew just how to make this trip a little bit more fun.

Brandon enjoyed the sound of their screams.

Once he was done having his fun, he stared at the broken form beneath him with pride. He snapped a quick photo of them for posterity's sake, before turning around and beholding the sight

behind him. About a dozen twisted and mangled corpses were strewn about the snow, each one a masterpiece in his eyes. "Maybe this wasn't quite such a waste of time." He thought to himself. He made his way from one beautiful sight to another, making sure to take a photo of each of them. Eventually, he made his way to the last of the corpses, this one had their face completely caved in. He snapped a photo of them but noticed something odd when the flash went off. There was something shiny in the snow, right next to them. He wasn't sure what drew him towards it, but he soon found himself picking it up and examining it. It was a silver locket, he figured it belonged to the corpse beneath him and that caused him to smirk. "It'll probably have a photo of his family inside," he thought to himself mischievously. He quickly opened it and all the glee fled from him when he saw the photo inside.

It was a photo of him and the two traitors, they were all smiling happily in it, not a care in the world. He remembered the day when they took the photo, his sixth birthday.

He gripped the locket tighter as he stared at the photo. "Were you already planning to kill me back then?" He asked the photo, not expecting an answer. After a moment of silence, he continued. "I never wanted to kill either of you. I tried to pretend to be weak for your sakes, I wanted to make you both proud." He felt his lips begin to quiver but he forced them to be still as he continued. "But both of you still lied and tried to kill me. You were so stupid about how you tried to do it Kyle. When you shot me, I thought it was just an accident. All you had to do was lie and apologize. But you didn't, did you? You just had to try a second time even though it obviously wouldn't work out for you. At least you were actually smart about it mo-" He stopped when he realized what he was almost about to call her. He corrected himself. "Tori. If Kyle hadn't been so stupid and put me on guard, you would've been able to get me. Even then, I almost believed those sweet little lies you whispered in my ear as you prepared to kill me... or maybe I just wanted to believe them." He looked at the photo, for once letting a hint of sadness enter his eyes. "Did you ever love me?"

There was silence.

He shook his head before dropping the locket on the ground. "What

am I doing talking to dead traitors?" He asked himself.

He looked up at the night sky, planning to fly away. But as he looked at the millions of stars, all twinkling and defying the jet black sky behind them, he felt his anger give way to a new curiosity. "I wonder what my parents, my real ones, are like?" He was surprised by his own question because he had never given his origins much thought before. Even the goal to "Take the world," was never given much thought by him. But now that he began to wonder about his parents, he couldn't help but ask himself if he was really fulfilling his duty. "All I've really done is burn down a few towns and have some fun with the prey. That's not really taking the world, is it? It probably isn't, but I just got started and it's not like I'm in a rush or anything." That satisfied him until he considered two possibilities, the first being what if taking the world involved killing all of the prey, the second being what if he didn't have enough time. While he would have no problem with killing all of the prey, (except for his love, she belongs to him) it would take quite a while to hunt them all down, time he may not have. For all he knew his parents could show up tomorrow and be mad at him for not taking the world yet. He really didn't want to disappoint his parents in their first meeting, so he prepared himself to fly away and begin a worldwide slaughter. But he stopped himself when he considered a third possibility. "What if they want me to enslave them all? If that's the case, killing them all would also make them mad at me." He rubbed his head in frustration. "Who knew taking the world could be so hard?"

After spending a good while debating the merits of a worldwide genocide versus mass enslavement, he finally settled on a compromise. "I'll just kill half of them and enslave the rest. If my parents are pissed about it, I'll explain how I wasn't sure about what they wanted me to do, then I'll kill all of the prey." Happy with his decision, he took off into the sky and truly began his reign of terror. At least that's what he was planning to do until he heard a squelching and cracking noise.

Before he even knew what was happening, he found himself face down on the snow. Then, the pain hit. Brandon couldn't help but let out a scream as he felt a searing hot pain spread throughout his leg, even his bones shared in this horrible feeling, at least his foot was

spared this agony, that simply felt cold. He looked down at his leg, desperate to find the cause of his pain. It didn't take long for him to find it, and when he did his face paled.

Sticking out of the front of his knee a good six inches, was a shard of the ship. He stared at the shard and the blood spurting from his knee onto the snow below in absolute shock. He let out a small whimper he did his best to pretend never happened as he reached out to touch the shard in disbelief. It was razor sharp, simply rubbing the side of it with his fingertip caused a pinprick of blood to climb down his finger.

He laid there in pain until a single question managed to worm its way past the pain induced haze in his mind. "Where did the shard come from?" With that single thought, a cold long forgotten feeling began to weigh him down. He did his best to ignore it and jumped up to his feet, at least that's what he tried. What really happened was as soon as his left foot touched the snow, his knee gave out and he collapsed. "That's right, I should probably try to get rid of the giant shard sticking out of my knee first." Desperate, he began to pull and tug at the shard, (doing his best to ignore how the shard cut his hands each time he pulled, and the cold wet feeling slowly climbing down his cheek).

With one final pull, a squelching noise was heard as he removed the shard and tossed it to the ground. For his efforts, his hands were torn into bloody ribbons. He panted with pain as he watched the blood gushing from the wound. At that moment, the sight of blood didn't excite him, it simply made him feel sick. Ignoring his sudden aversion to blood, he realized it probably wasn't healthy to have that much of it coming out of him. He wondered if he had the time to stop the bleeding when there's somebody out there who managed to track down one of the shards. But he figured since he was only attacked once they must've only had the one. He managed to give a sinister grin despite the pain as he thought of different ways to pay them back for this.

With that problem temporarily shoved out of his mind, he racked his brain for any information on how to treat the wound. Eventually, he remembered an article in one of those medical magazines he used to read, about how to make an emergency tourniquet. (He actually did

read those magazines for more than just the pictures. When he still thought he was like all the other prey he wanted to become a surgeon, in the hopes of being able to... satisfy his desires without hurting anybody. He found the mere idea of it laughable now.) He unbuckled the belt he was wearing and ripped off his cape and mask to make a makeshift tourniquet. It didn't take long for him to finish and that quickly stopped most of the bleeding from the knee.

"Now it's time to get back up, find whoever did this, and listen to their screams." He felt rather smug when he proclaimed this to himself. So that's why he cursed so much when his knee immediately gave out on him again. He hadn't realized this yet, but when the shard impacted his knee it completely and utterly shattered his kneecap. He kept trying to climb back onto his feet, failing and swearing each time until finally, a very embarrassing thought occurred to him. "What am I doing, I can fly?" He slowly levitated off the ground. His cheeks were blood red, whether that was from anger, embarrassment or the cold, couldn't be told. He let out a huff before muttering. "At the very least nobody saw that." He slowly turned around and saw something that caused his heart to skip a beat.

A few hundred feet behind him, a massive wall of shards hovered in the air. Some were just as sharp as the one that pierced him, while others resembled discs more than anything else. In front of this wall stood the one who denied him his chance to claim what was rightfully his at Arizona. She was looking down at an invisible watch and was tapping her feet in the snow impatiently. A few tense seconds past before she looked up at him with a smile and waved. "Took you long enough Brandon, I was starting to wonder if I needed to help you get back up."

Brandon blinked in surprise as three questions rushed through his mind, one at a time but each question came out faster and more panicked than the last. "How does she know my name? Wait how did she find the ship? She should be dead! I blew a hole in her chest didn't I?"

Ignoring Brandon's confusion she continued. "So how's it feel to be back home? I imagine it must be awful weird for you after all that you've done." When he made no response, she sighed and spoke up again. "Getting to the point, just give up Brandon. I promise not to

kill you or let anyone else do so, and all kidding aside, I really do believe that you can be better."

This comment was enough to bring Brandon back to reality as his fist tightened. He wouldn't be cowed by some lowly prey, what would his parents think of that? No, he would ignore the many, many questions this woman made him think of, for now. He can rip them all out of her later, alongside her entrails. Besides, it didn't matter how many or how strong of weapons she had, he would always be able to beat her, she's only human after all.

He flew straight at her, full speed with full intent to rip her to shreds. "If I go fast enough she won't have time to defend herself." In less than five seconds he was within mere feet of her. But before he could reach her, dozens of the disc shards formed a small wall in front of her. Brandon noticed it and smirked, believing he would be able to easily plow through it since they were all dull and flat. Unfortunately, this didn't prove to be the case.

Brandon laid on the ground in pain, clutching his head as he tried to force himself back up. He was able to quickly do so but found himself flung back about a hundred feet by an invisible force as soon as he did. He let out a growl when he saw the discs move away, revealing she hadn't moved an inch. Seeing an opportunity he shot out a laser beam from his eyes, aiming for her knee. The same thing as earlier happened and a wall of discs formed to block it. He let out a smile, stopped shooting his laser and began to fly up. In just a few seconds he managed to get a few hundred feet in the air and began the next stage in his plan. He shot straight down towards her, hoping to catch her by surprise. He was less than a hundred feet away from her when a wall of sharp shards suddenly formed above her. He let out a curse as he avoided impaling himself. He landed right behind her and spotted a shard of perfectly normal glass sticking out of the snow next to her. He shot another laser, hoping that it would reflect off the glass and hit her, instead the glass simply melted. He was preparing another attack when he noticed her yawning, he felt a blood vessel pop.

It continued like this for hours. He would try to punch through her walls to only be rewarded with the crack of broken bones. He would

try to hit her with his lasers only to find one of the sharp shards flying straight towards him. Any attempt at outmaneuvering or outsmarting her only led to further frustration. Yet he refused to give up, not yet.

He blinked and realized he was lying back on the snow, his head was ringing. He pulled himself back up, to charge at her again.

He blinked and found himself lying on the snow once again, everything looked blurry. He pulled himself back up, to try killing her once more.

This repeated like clockwork, blink, lay on the snow, charge, blink, lay on the snow, charge. Despite all the pain, he still refused to give up.

He blinked again, the world seemed to be a red haze all around him. He eventually noticed he was kneeling in the snow. He tried to stand back up, but quickly realized he possessed not enough strength to do so. He tried again but quickly collapsed back onto the ground. His head was pounding as he slowly tried to stand up once more. Every bone and muscle in his body screamed at him in protest as he forced himself to stand. He could barely see the figure of the woman, slowly approaching him through the red haze. As she grew closer, he felt that long-forgotten feeling grip him, trying to drag him down. "If you don't leave right now I'll rip you and everyone you love to shreds!" He yelled at her.

When she kept approaching, he added other indecent threats and curses. He felt himself begin to sway to and through. His head began to pound and he noticed the woman had somehow become three different women.

Not long after noticing this, he collapsed onto the ground and rested.

The first thing he noticed was just how much his body ached. "What did I do last night?" He thought to himself. He opened his eyes, hoping to get some hint of where he was and what exactly happened.

That's when he noticed the second thing, he couldn't see. He let out a yell of panic when he realized this and tried to stand up. That's when, much to his horror, he realized the third thing, he couldn't move. And finally, he remembered what happened. "Did... did I die, is this hell?" He asked himself.

He felt very surprised when somebody else answered. "No, you're not dead. Although before all this is over I'll probably be asking myself that second thing a lot."

He almost instantly recognized that voice to be of the woman from earlier, and he felt that cold long forgotten feeling called fear gripped his heart. "She's kept me alive so she can torture me to death like I'm prey."

He began to struggle to free himself from whatever was holding him down. But despite his best efforts failed to. Even when he tried to burn through whatever was holding him with his lasers, he did little but to warm up his own eyes. "It's pointless, I've used the shards of the ship to tie you down and blindfold you. Didn't want you to break your casts and bandages." He let out a growl and simply redoubled his efforts to escape. She sighed. "I'm not going to kill or hurt you, I promise Brandon." When he continued his efforts, she sighed again and he heard the sound of a chair being moved. He braced himself, fully expecting to feel some horrific pain. Instead, he felt surprised when he heard a door open. "I know it may be hard for you to believe, but I don't want to kill you." She let out a huff before adding. "I'm going to get you some tea. Also if it makes you feel any better, if I wanted to kill you I would've done it already." As the door slammed shut, he couldn't help but think about how that didn't make him feel better at all.

Jane sighed as she listened to whistling of the kettle. "I hope he'll calm down soon, I really hate having him handcuffed like a prisoner. Then again, that's pretty much what he is, isn't it?" It hadn't been too difficult to set her plan up after her second fight with Brandon. She was able to get the government to happily pay for all of Brandon's medical bills with the help of some blackmail. She already owned the cabin they were currently staying in, so there was no problem with that.

Staying here again gave her memories from the last time she was here, she remembered just how much she hated Dad for keeping her cooped up in here. She knew now that it was for her own good, but she couldn't help but feel guilty for doing even worse to Brandon. She was well aware of the fact, what she had chosen to do with Brandon would commonly be considered dumb. She was also very aware that her plan could horribly backfire. But all those facts didn't particularly matter when she took one final fact into consideration. She couldn't bring herself to kill a child, not again, not when she could try to help them. So she would do her best to show Brandon she meant no harm, show him that she wanted nothing but the best for him. And maybe it could all work out. Maybe with her help, Brandon could see the mistakes he made, maybe he could be good, maybe.

(AN)

So this is the ending of the story, kinda premature I know. My plan was always to make this just a short story. Also, this chapter went through about 3-4 rewrites and I have to say I'm quite proud of this. It's certainly nowhere near good literature, but I think it marks a good improvement on my writing skills. I mainly chose to write this for making the type of story I would want to read, as well to improve my writing capabilities. I have some basic ideas for other stories, I'm mainly debating between one set in the wonderful book series of Narnia by C.S Lewis, which I highly recommend, or one set in Undertale, (which I honestly never played because I spoiled myself by watching a game theory video. A choice I highly regret now. But I did watch a let's play of it.)

I hope y'all enjoy this, and if you like the story, (or hate it) please leave a review. Now that I think, if you do hate it, it's more important for you to leave a review so I can improve my writing. Speaking of reviews and improving, thanks to AM83220 for all his advice, you're awesome.

So God bless all y'all and thanks for reading